## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A press device comprising:

a fixed lower member for supporting at least one guide post;

a movable upper member supported by said at least guide post, said moveable upper member moveable between a raised non-working position and a lowered working position; and

a safety block device supported at least by said fixed lower member, said safety block device including a generally upright column disposed adjacent said at least one guide post and moveable between a retracted non-working position, wherein said column does not support said moveable upper member, and an extended working position, wherein said column is effective to support said moveable upper member and prevent movement thereof, said column including an upper end portion and a lower end portion, said lower end portion including a generally rounded first portion and a generally second flat portion which is slightly offset with respect to said first portion whereby when said safety block device is in the extended working position, said generally flat second portion of said lower end portion of said column rests firmly on an underlying surface of either said safety block device or said fixed lower member.

2. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said column includes a bore formed therein, a pin is disposed in said bore, and said safety block device includes an actuation device for pivotally moving said column between said retracted non-working position and said extended working position.

3. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said at least one guide post defines a guide post centerline, said upper end portion of said column includes a pair of legs, and wherein when said moveable upper member is in said raised non-working position and said safety block device is in said extended working position, said legs of said column extend past said guide post centerline.

4. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said column is generally U-shaped and has an inner radius of curvature slightly larger than an outer diameter of said at least one guide post.

5. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said press device is a casting machine having four guide posts, and at least two of said four guide posts have said safety block device disposed adjacent thereto.

6. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said press device is a casting machine, said casting machine including a base plate for supporting a lower mold half, an upper mold half supported above said lower mold half.

7. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said lower end portion of said safety block device is operatively secured to said fixed lower member and said upper end portion of said safety block device is operatively secured to an upper end portion of said at least one guide post.

8. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said safety block device is automatically moveable between said retracted non-working position and said extended working position by an automatic actuation device operatively carried by said column, wherein said actuation device includes a cylinder having a movable member which is operative to pivot said column about said at least one guide post.

9. (Original) The press device according to Claim 1 wherein said column extends about said at least one guide post to encompass more than 50 percent of a diameter thereof.

10. (Original) A casting machine comprising:

a base plate;

a lower mold half attached to said base plate;

a plurality of guide posts secured to and extending upwardly from said base plate to define an operating area there between;

a fixed platen supported at the top of said guide posts;

a moveable platen operatively carried by said guide posts for vertical movement thereof in said operating area;

a tilt plate operatively connected to said movable platen;

an upper mold half attached to said tilt plate; and

at least one safety block device operatively secured to at least said base plate, said at least one safety block device including a generally upright column disposed adjacent a respective one of said plurality of said guide posts and moveable between a retracted non-working position, wherein said column does not support said moveable platen, and an extended working position, wherein said column is effective to support said moveable platen and prevent movement thereof, said column including an upper end portion and a lower end portion, said lower end portion including a generally rounded first portion and a generally second flat portion which is slightly offset with respect to said first portion whereby when said at least one safety block device is in the extended working position, said generally flat second portion of said lower end portion of said column rests firmly on an underlying surface of either said at least one safety block device or said base plate.

11. (Original) The casting machine according to Claim 10 wherein said column includes a bore formed therethrough, a pivot pin is disposed in said bore, and said at least one safety block device further includes an actuating mechanism for pivotally moving said column between said retracted non-working position and said extended working position.

12. (Original) The casting machine device according to Claim 10 wherein said respective one of said plurality of said guide posts defines a guide post centerline, said upper end portion of said column includes a pair of legs, and wherein when said moveable platen is in said raised non-working position and said at least one safety block device is in said extended working position, said legs of said column extend past said guide post centerline.

13. (Original) The casting machine according to Claim 10 wherein said column is generally U-shaped and has an inner radius of curvature slightly larger than an outer diameter of said plurality of said guide posts.

14. (Original) The casting machine according to Claim 10 wherein said casting machine has four guide posts, and at least two of said four guide posts have said safety block device disposed adjacent thereto.

15. (Original) The press device according to Claim 10 wherein said lower end portion of said at least one safety block device is operatively secured to base plate and said upper end portion of said at least one safety block device is operatively secured to an upper end portion of said respective one of said plurality of said guide posts.

16. (Original) The press device according to Claim 10 wherein said column extends about said respective one of said plurality of said posts to encompass more than 50 percent of a diameter thereof.

17. (Original) A safety block device for supporting a generally vertically movable component about a guide post of a press device, said safety block device comprising:

a generally upright column adapted to be disposed adjacent the guide post and moveable between a retracted non-working position, wherein said column does not support the moveable component, and an extended working position, wherein said column is effective to support the moveable component and prevent movement thereof, said column including an upper end portion and a lower end portion, said lower end portion including a generally rounded first portion and a generally second flat portion which is slightly offset with respect to said first portion whereby when said safety block device is in the extended working position, said generally flat second portion of said lower end portion of said column rests firmly on an underlying surface of either said safety block device or the press device.

18. (Original) The safety block device according to Claim 17 wherein said column includes a bore formed therethrough, a pivot pin is disposed in said bore, and said safety block device further includes an actuating mechanism for pivotally moving said column between said retracted non-working position and said extended working position.

19. (Original) The casting machine according to Claim 17 wherein said column is generally U-shaped and has an inner radius of curvature slightly larger than an outer diameter of the guide post.